

Amendments to the Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A method for combating the formation of emulsions in production fluid, comprising the ~~step~~ steps of:

commingling fluid with the production fluid; and ~~so that the commingled fluid has an oil to water ratio outside a range of oil to water ratios at which emulsions are liable to form, and characterised by the step of:~~

detecting either (a) a ratio of around 50% oil and 50% water by volume in the production fluid at which emulsions form, or (b) the presence of emulsions in the production fluid;

wherein the commingled fluid has an oil to water ratio outside a range of oil to water ratios at which emulsions are liable to form.

2. (Currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the detecting step further comprises the steps of:

measuring the ratio of oil to water in a production fluid[,]; and

detecting if the oil to water ratio is inside the range of oil to water ratios at which emulsions are formed.

3. (Currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 2, wherein the measuring step and subsequent detecting step ~~comprises~~ further comprise comparing the volumetric

flowrate of oil separated from the production fluid with the volumetric flowrate of water separated from the production fluid.

4. (Currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the detecting step comprises detecting the formation of emulsions in the production fluid using a nucleonic level sensor or some other appropriate sensor installed in a suitable vessel ~~(16,16',60,60')~~ ~~to detect the formation of emulsions in the production fluid.~~

5. (Currently amended) The method as claimed in ~~any preceding~~ claim 1, including the additional step of adjusting the amount of fluid to be commingled with the production fluid in response to the detecting step to maintain that the commingled fluid has an oil to water ratio outside a range of oil to water ratios at which emulsions are liable to form.

6. (Currently amended) The method as claimed in ~~any preceding~~ claim 1, including the additional step of separating a fluid from the production fluid[,]; and

wherein the commingling step comprising further comprises commingling at least a portion of said fluid separated from the production fluid with the production fluid before the production fluid is detected for emulsions.

7. (Currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 6, wherein oil comprises the fluid separated and commingled with the production fluid ~~comprises oil or water~~.

8. (Currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 6 ~~or 7~~, wherein the separating step further comprises the step of separating a fluid from the production fluid ~~takes place~~ at a host facility ~~(2)~~ or ~~at or near~~ about at least one wellhead ~~(5)~~.

9. (Currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 6, ~~7 or 8~~, wherein the separating step further comprises the step of separating a fluid from the production fluid ~~takes place~~ in a retrievable module ~~(7)~~ for use with a modular seabed processing system.

10. (Currently amended) The method as claimed in ~~any one of claims~~ claim 6 to 9, wherein both the separating and commingling steps further comprise the steps of separating a fluid from the production fluid and commingling at least a portion of said fluid separated from the production fluid with the production fluid before the production fluid is detected for emulsions ~~takes place~~ in a retrievable module ~~(7)~~ for use with a modular seabed processing system.

11. (Currently amended) The method as claimed in ~~any one of claims~~ claim 1 to 9, wherein the commingling step further comprises commingling fluid with the production

fluid ~~takes place~~ in a retrievable module ~~(7)~~ for use with a modular seabed processing system.

12. (Currently amended) The method as claimed in ~~any preceding~~ claim 1, wherein the commingling step further comprises commingling fluid with the production fluid ~~takes place at or near~~ about at least one wellhead ~~(5)~~.

13. (Currently amended) A system for combating the formation of emulsions, comprising:

commingling means ~~(10)~~ for commingling fluid with the production fluid so that the commingled fluid has an oil to water ratio outside the range of oil to water ratios at which emulsions are likely to form[,]; and characterised by:

means ~~(22,24,30,42,48,49)~~ for detecting either (a) a ratio of around 50% oil and 50% water by volume in the production fluid at which emulsions form, or (b) the presence of emulsions in the production fluid.

14. (New claim) The method as claimed in claim 6, wherein water comprises the fluid separated and commingled with the production fluid.